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FAX

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Jerome W. Massie	Date: February 24, 2003	No. of Pages: _____ (including this page)	Application No: 09/752,444
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nents:

**CASE MATCH THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT WITH THE FILE
D DELIVER TO THE EXAMINER.**

Stapor;

see find attached a RESPONSE for the above identified application. If portion of this transmission is not received, immediately contact me today in order a complete response can be filed. If you have any questions or comments, please do hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

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>at 2/24/03 7:45:30 AM [Eastern Standard Time]

Docket: 740165-278

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re PATENT application of)
Keisuke IMAI et al.)
Serial No. 09/752,444) Art Unit: 2834
Filed: 01/03/01) Examiner: T. Lam
For: ROLL CONNECTOR STRUCTURE)
FOR A VEHICLE) **PROPOSED**

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner of Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231 on March ___, 2003.

April Campbell

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Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

The following is presented in response to the final Office Action mailed November 29, 2002, which has been received and carefully reviewed. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the new ground of rejection is respectfully requested for the reasons advanced in detail below. Claims 1-4 remain pending.

With regard to the rejection to claims 1-4, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), as being obvious in view of the teachings of the admitted prior art (Figure 3) combined with the teachings of the newly cited Masuda ('782), at pages 2-3, of the final Office Action, the Applicants would point out that, from a reading of Masuda, it appears the Examiner has misunderstood the teachings of the patent.

Specifically, Masuda (Figure 3) teaches a stator-side casing (column switch body 29, integral outer cylinder 31, and under cover 41) having affixed thereto a head lamp switch 23

and a wiper control switch 25 within slots (Figures 1 and 2; column 30-37) in the column switch body 29. The stator-side casing, i.e., the column switch body 29 and integral outer cylinder 31, is fixed relative to the steering column. The patentee also teaches a rotor-side casing (inner cylinder 33 and disk upper cover 43) attached to a steering wheel which includes a switch (squib-connection connector 53) electrically connected to the cable 35 via a connector at one end of the cable 35 (column 4, lines 11-21). Therefore, it is evident that the Masuda does not teach at least one steering wheel switch (squib-connection connector 53) connected to the rotor-side casing 43 without wires as presently claimed. The patentee instead teaches that the switches 23 and 25 are electrically connected to the stator-side casing, via collective connector 55 formed integral with the column switch body 29; while, the stator-side casing is formed of the column switch body 29, integral outer cylinder 31 and under cover 41 and has a separate wired connection to an electrical switch (squib-connection connector 53). That is, the patentee, in direct contrast to the claimed invention, teaches that the connection of a steering wheel switch (squib-connection connector 53) is performed by connection of one end of the wire cable 35 to the switch (squib-connection connector 53). Masuda contains absolutely no teaching of electrically connecting switches 23 and 25 to the rotor-side casing (inner cylinder 33 and disk upper cover 43)..

As noted the Applicant's previous Amendment of June 19, 2002, M.P.E.P. Chapters 2142-2143.03 set forth that three basic criteria must be met by the prior art to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or the general knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify or combine the reference(s). Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success of the proposed combination, and third, the prior art must teach or suggest all of the claimed limitations.

The Examiner's rejection of claims 1-4, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), discussed above, fail to satisfy all three requirements above for establishing a *prima facie* case of obviousness since no reference or combination of references teaches or suggests each and every feature of claim 1 as outlined above, i.e., at least one steering wheel switch electrically connected to the rotor-side casing without wires. Nor does the proposed combination of references provide a reasonable expectation of success in that the combination proposed by the Examiner, if

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made, would not yield the device presently claimed, i.e., it would instead yield a steering wheel switch 53 connected via cable 35 to rotor-side casing 43. The proposed combination would in fact yield an apparatus which is the same as the instant admitted prior art shown in Figure 3. Further, neither Masuda or the Examiner provide a suggestion or motivation for one of ordinary skill in the prior art to modify the admitted prior art to make an electrical connection of a steering wheel switch to a rotor-side casing without wires as presently claimed. For these reasons, the Examiner's rejection of claims 1-4, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), is believed to be improper and should be withdrawn.

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise, which could be eliminated through discussions with applicants' representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Reg. No. 28,290

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